

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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DRAFTED BY ARA:FMCNEIL;HA:MSCHNEIDER;JD:BGT
APPROVED BY D:WCHRISTOPHER
ARA:JABUSHNELL

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 175686

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:SHUM, PINT, PA

SUBJECT:LAINO ARREST

1. WE APPRECIATE YOUR PROMPT ACTION WHICH MAY HAVE PREVENTED THE LAINO AFFAIR FROM TURNING INTO SOMETHING WORSE. YOU SHOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE PARAGUAYAN GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING TO STROESSNER DIRECTLY IF IT BECOMES POSSIBLE, OF OUR DEEP CONCERN ABOUT THE OFFICIAL ABDUCTION AND THE REPORTS OF MISTREATMENT OF LAINO. WE WOULD LIKE TO PURSUE A COURSE OF ACTION THAT RESULTS IN LAINO'S RELEASE. GIVEN YOUR PERCEPTION THAT THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT IN THE GOP, WE WOULD LIKE TO AVOID PLAYING INTO THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO MIGHT ARGUE THAT LAINO SHOULD BE KEPT IN JAIL IN ORDER TO SHOW THAT PARAGUAY REFUSES TO BOW TO ALLEGED AMERICAN INTERVEN-
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TION. NEVERTHELESS, THEY SHOULD BE CLEARLY AWARE THAT WE DEPLORE THIS UNACCEPTABLE ACTION. THE PRESS STATEMENT VOLUNTEERED AT THE NOON BRIEFING (SENT SEPTTEL) IS STRONG BUT AVOIDS ANY PUBLIC THREATS.

2. YOU SHOULD REPEAT THE STRONG SENTIMENT IN THE STATEMENT, NOTING THAT THE STATEMENT STICKS TO THE

FACTS, WHICH ARE BAD ENOUGH, BUT ALSO NOTING THE ABSENCE OF ANY PUBLIC THREATS. HOWEVER, YOU SHOULD ADD THAT SUCH ACTS CALL INTO QUESTION THE ABILITY OF THE USG TO HAVE A COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH PARAGUAY.

EMPHASIZE AGAIN, AS YOU HAVE, THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN INEVITABLE REACTION IN WASHINGTON, IN THE CONGRESS AND THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AS WELL AS IN CERTAIN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE HERE BECAUSE IT HAS LEFT THE IMPRESSION IN THE MINDS OF SOME THAT THE ACTION BY THE PUBLIC WAS TAKEN AGAINST LAINO AS A DELIBERATE RESPONSE TO HIS HAVING MET WITH AMERICAN ' OFFICIALS WHILE HERE.

3. ALSO NOTE THAT WE APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT DR. VARGAS HAS BEEN RELEASED AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S ASSURANCES THAT MRS. LAINO CAN SEE HER HUSBAND. WHAT WE WOULD HOPE FOR IS FOR THE PARAGUAYANS TO FIND A WAY TO RELEASE LAINO PROMPTLY SO THAT THIS INCIDENT CAN BE VIEWED AS AN ABERRATION IN AN IMPROVING PATTERN OF HUMAN RIGHTS BEHAVIOR.

4. THE OVERALL TONE OF YOUR A PROACH TO THE GOP ON THIS MATTER SHOULD BE TEMPERATE BUT FIRM.

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CHRISTOPHER

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